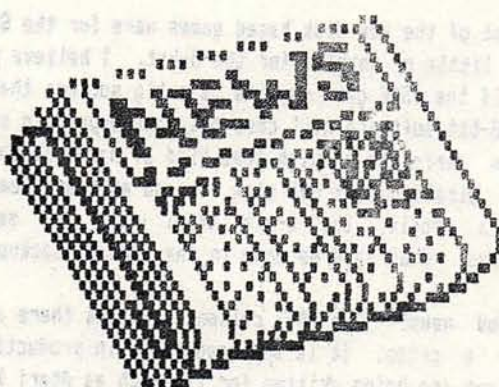


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## Notice: There is no Meeting in July

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## CES NEWS

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This report is an amalgamation of material submitted by Jeff Williams of SCAT and Terry Frits of RACC, the transcript of the Michtron Round Table (GENIE) conference on the Tuesday night of the show, and material supplied by CIS ATARIDEV SYSOP David G. Groves, Antic's on-line edition, C.F. Scott, sysop on the ANALOG Database on Delphi and Bob Ratelle, the sysop of the Atari Round Tables on GENIE. Portions of this article are copyright by CIS, David G. Groves, ANTIC PUBLISHING INC., Delphi and GENIE (COPYRIGHT 1987).

Printed in the newsletters of the Rockford Atari Computer Club and the Suburban Chicago ATarians.

From the Atari Booth, topped with a real Cessna Airplane, the word was "flying high with Atari". The theme followed through into the exhibit space where Flight Simulator II played from a cartridge on a large screen monitor inside the cockpit of a Cessna. Atari chose to push its game side, and the new computer lines were not being shown. There was a PC Clone getting minimal attention but the absence of MEGA ST's, Laser printers, 1200 baud modems, Blitter enhanced ST's, IBM emulator, and 80 Column Cards, left little doubt that this was to be a game show. Recently appointed Vice President and General Manager of US operations, J. J. (Jerry) Brown confirmed this in his press release stating "Atari intends to remain the leader in video game systems and to increase its share of the US personal computer market."

There were rumors heard before the show that we would see mostly games at the Atari booth, and for the first time in a long time a rumor about Atari was right. Again Atari had one of the biggest booths in the new section of McCormick Place and it was always packed. Also it was very different. They had a real airplane on the top of their booth to attract attention to the booth and their new 65XE game machine. The whole Atari exhibit was given the airport theme with the slogan of "Fly with Atari" and free sets of pilots wings and a required boarding pass to climb the stairs to see the airplane and the 65XE game machine. The game machine they were showing there had the keyboard built in and looked a lot like the 65XE except for the round pastel reset, start, etc. buttons. Everyone working for Atari was wearing either flight attendant or ground crew clothes so they were easy to spot.

The Flight Simulator II was playing in several spots along with the rows of 2600 and 7800 game machines with their new releases loaded for all to play with. There were 8 or 10 new titles for both the 7800 and the 2600. One-on-One for the 7800 is done and is great! (I am undefeated in the last year, it must be great!) and Desert Falcon is also done and into production. Even the new 2600

games were pretty impressive. And Activision and Epyx announced that they're doing their own titles for the 2600, and Atari Explorer and ANALOG will begin video game coverage on a limited basis.

Also many of the software dealers were there showing their newest creations. It seems everyone has a new desktop publishing program either on the way or ready to release. There were a few CAD programs being shown also, I really liked one named SCAD from Xetec.

Most of the new disk based games were for the ST machines with little or nothing for the 8-bit. I believe personally that if the 65XE game machine is a big success that a lot of new 8-bit software will come out, but expect to see much of it on cartridge or with some kind of hardware key. If the 8-bit pirating does not slow down so software companies can make a profit, the 8-bit Atari will not see any new programs. What have we done in the name of backups?

Good news! The 80 column card was there and looking clear & crisp. It is supposed to be in production now and programs are being written for it (such as Atari Writer PLUS 80). Also the new 5 1/4 disk drive for the 8 bit; it's double sided, double density and faster loading than the 1050 but sells for about the same price. Both items are supposed to be in production now and on the markets by the end of June. As usual with Atari though don't hold your breath waiting to buy -- you may pass out.

Well there were many other things at the Atari booth, like the new Word Writer by TIME WORKS with a Thesaurus (I had to look that up), an arcade game for the ST named Plutos (a cross between Glaxian & Zaxxon with a little Threshold graphics thrown in), plus much more. But the greatest thing was the interest Atari draws. I can't understand why more places aren't selling Ataris, it's easy to see they're crowd pleasers.

For those wondering, Commodore didn't show up. I was told they pulled out 2 days before the CES. Still Atari had a lot of competition from Nintendo and several other game machines. It should be a very interesting Christmas season this year, with lots of Atari commercials.

Oh yes, believe it or not there are other things there beside Ataris, computers, and games. We saw the newest VCR's, & Cam Corders (boy is the new Super VHS ever sharp!). We saw large screens and small screens, stereo screens and multi screens. Stereos, car players, CDS, laser disks, high resolution TV, fancy cars with fancy ladies showing fancy car stereos. If it's electronic it's got to be at the CES.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4





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### New ST Titles

"Sub-Battle" from Epyx,  
"Goldrunner" from Michtron.  
"Scenery disk #7" for "Flight Simulator II", "ST-Wars", "Fleet Street Publisher", "Stereo CAD 3-D 2.0" with the Stereo-Tek 3-D glasses, "Midway Battles", "Stuff" from Michtron, "X-Rated Graphics" for Printmaster+, "Alice Personal Pascal", "Mad-Libs", "M-Cache" and "Logistix".

### New 8 bit Software

"AwardWare", "Technicolor Dream" a 256 color graphic art program, "Pirates of the Barbary Coast", "Midway Battles", "Freaky Factory", "Laser Hawk", "Guderian", "Rocket Repair Man", "Guitar Wizard", "Phantasia", "Autoduel", "Hollywood Hijinx", "221-B Baker St.", "News Station" and "Money Spin"

All software is discounted, user group members with valid I.D. receive a 20% discount off the retail price of software.





While the first impressions to an Atari Business computer user were quite negative, given that Jerry Brown's press release, titled "ATARI ANNOUNCES AGGRESSIVE NEW MARKETING CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT VIDEO GAMES AND PERSONAL COMPUTERS" was simultaneously issued with releases titled "ATARI ANNOUNCES 40 NEW GAMES AND LICENSING AGREEMENTS WITH COMPUTER GAME AND ARCADE COMPANIES" and "ATARI TO BEGIN SHIPMENT OF NEW XE GAME SYSTEM BUNDLED WITH THREE POPULAR GAMES" and given that no "business" computer releases were made, a closer reading of the releases lead to some rather surprising hypothesis of the situation.

The first page and 3/4's of the 3 page advertising campaign announcement is devoted to game machine promotions planned for the balance of this year, including national TV spots starting in September, comic book ads, in store hardware and software demos, and full repackaging of the game machines and XE's. Not until the back pages did we note that 4 TV ads (starting late 3rd quarter and running through January 1st) and a substantial portion of the new advertising budget (quadrupled from previous levels) would be devoted to the ST's! (This as opposed to 3 new ads starting in September for the games.) The budget also calls for some major print ads to follow and support the TV effort.

Now the pessimist will assume that Atari is bent on forgetting the computers in favor of games. The more business oriented will notice that Atari stock and sales of ST's have been doing rather well, and that in the introduction of the ST's and MEGA, the games assets of the company were nearly step-children. Further, the XE is almost in direct competition with the ST's and likely in an overstocked condition at Atari. The optimist will, therefore, assume that Atari is on a campaign to liquidate the old stock in new boxes, maintain its game market share, and produce the liquidity and corporate energies to actively continue its ST advantage. In assessing Atari's strategies, one must remember that the manpower of this company has sorely lagged it's growth in home computer market share, and that Atari had nothing to do with the conflicting schedules of CES and Comdex this year. With limited manpower and time to produce and to sell product, I am optimistic and feel that Atari made the right decisions in the face of the tough decision forced by The Interface Group's show timing. The balance of this quarter should tell!

The emphasis of this show is entertainment, so that is why no Megs and no laser printers and no modems are being displayed. They are pretty much sticking to what is currently available for the ST hardware-wise. However, I wouldn't be surprised if they were to have a Mega or two that they are showing privately. In fact, I was chatting with Jim Tittsler, one of Atari's engineers, on 6Enie last night. He has spent the last several weeks at Atari's Japan division working very hard to come up with a working CD-ROM

player to have it ready for the show. He said it looks like Atari will be able to produce this one at a reasonable price...and it lets you play audio CD's too! He was rather surprised (and I think disappointed) when I told him it was not being shown. So this too may have been there at CES but in a closed room to select people.

In addition to the Cessna, there was an actual aircraft cockpit whose controls were tied into an ST running Flight Simulator II on a large projection TV out the front window, giving a very realistic feeling to the game! All of this tied into the packaging of the FS II game cartridge with the new XE Game System, which includes the main game console, a detached keyboard unit and a 'gun' type game controller (to let you blast things on the screen). The XE Game System is effectively a 65XE computer, but packaged to appeal to a much wider audience. By the way, the cartridges for the new game system will run on your existing 8-bit computer. But, before you try to run out and get your FSII cartridge, I've got bad news for you. It will not be available separately. If you want one, you will have to buy the whole new game system.

There was a large area devoted to the MIDI Music capabilities of the ST, including Hybrid Arts, Dr. T's, and the QRS Player Piano systems... the highlight there was a large shaggy robot from the 'Robot Factory,' playing along with the music, controlled from the ST's MIDI port! Its mouth moved in time with the voice of the announcer through a microphone -- this one got filmed by MTV News.

And all of this was just in the Atari booth!

#### 8-Bit News

Atari's 8-bit computer line is far from dead -- with a new double-speed, double-density 5 1/4 inch disk drive due this summer, as well as the long-awaited 1200 baud plug-in modem and the 80-column box...plus the XE Game System that comes with 64K, a keyboard, a light gun and Flight Simulator II.

We'll start with the good news for 8-bit users. The XF551 disk drive is the big surprise. It's a compact 5 1/4 inch drive in XE gray, about 3/4 the size of the now-discontinued 1050 drive. Essentially, the XF551 is an adaptation of the standard disk drive mechanism being used for Atari's IBM clone. The 360K, double-sided, true double-density 5 1/4 inch disk drive runs 2.9 times faster than the Atari 1050 and is due in the stores this summer at a \$199.95 list-price. It seemed clear from talking to a number of Atari sources that a 3 1/2 inch disk drive for the 8-bit computers is now unlikely to be produced.

The XF551 can automatically adapt itself to today's single density and enhanced density DOS disks. The XF551 drive will have a new ADOS operating system which is nearing completion by OSS, the creators of DOS 2 and DOS 2.5.



Promised features of ADOS include a tree structure allowing directories and easy toggle between menus or keyboard commands, and a high degree of file recovery safety.

Bill Wilkinson of OSS says that ADOS will run on any Atari-compatible disk drive, from the old 810 to a 16Mb hard disk. Although 8Mb is the upper limit for efficient operation, a larger hard disk can be partitioned into several logical drives. DOS 2 and 2.5 files can be read into ADOS, but ADOS is not fully compatible with the older operating systems.

According to Atari's Jose Valdes, the key engineer/designer of the new XE products described in this dispatch, the first XF551 drives can be expected to start trickling into the stores by July. The same July arrival date now holds true for the 80-column XEP80 display box (reviewed in the July '87 Antic) and the new 1200 baud SX212 modem. Valdes says both products have been delayed by a wait for delivery of main chips, but all other components and packaging are stockpiled in readiness for assembly at Atari's Taiwan factory.

AtariWriter Plus 80 was operating on the XEP80 in a razor-sharp 80-column display at the Atari Booth. The SX212 modem will be bundled with a new version of Keith Ledbetter's famed Express software.

"Okay, all those letters this month from Antic readers have convinced us there's still an 8-bit Atari market out there," said Springboard Software president John Poulson at his company's CES booth. "You'll be glad to know that Springboard has now started work on an 8-bit Atari version of Newsroom.

Newsroom is a popular entry-level page layout program for easy newsletters. Springboard is already showing an ST version of their Certificate Maker here, this product is currently shipping.

Good news for Atari graphics users who have been trying to find a touch tablet. Suncom's Animation Station for XL/XE is now available. The included software provides many pre-drawn pictures as well as automatic shape generation. The tablet can be used in place of joysticks or paddles to control any standard Atari software, according to Suncom. At Antic's suggestion, Suncom is now looking into converting their convenient keyboard-mounted joystick for use with the Atari 8-bit and ST.

Strategic Simulations Inc. had extra reason for celebrating at their suite, high above the Chicago River. Last week they signed a contract with TSR to start the first computer versions of the original Dungeons and Dragons games. You should be able to play D&D on your Atari by Christmas.

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Datasoft, now being released through Electronic Arts, has two welcome 8-bit titles due out before July. Video Title Shop (\$29.95) lets you create colorful animated sequences with graphics and moving text -- which can be transferred to your videorecorder tape via standard electronics cables. Video Title Shop includes the Micro- Painter Plus paint program and a library of built-in borders and screen images. Scrolling, position-changes, fadeouts and a whole range of video special effects are supported. A second disk of video "clip art" for the program will also be released this year.

Also from Datasoft at \$29.95 is the second installment of Alternate Reality -- The Dungeon -- which seems to play much faster and more conveniently, with less disk swapping than the earlier installment of this large-scale graphics adventure game.

Most of the unreleased software on display at CES was promised for shipment by early summer. One of the few new packages I was actually able to bring back for review is...Virtuoso. This is the long-evolving music/graphics storyboard system that Antic previewed almost two years ago. The XL/XE version is \$49.95 and the ST version is reportedly well along in development.

Infocom had two of its top adventure programmers on hand at the show -- Dave Lebling (Lurking Horror) and Steve Meretzky (Stationfall, Hitchhikers Guide). Brian Moriarty was left home in Boston to continue working on the new Beyond Zork project which will blend role-playing with the text adventure format. Activision, Infocom's parent company, had only two arcade cartridges for the Atari 2600, Kung Fu Master and Commando.

#### ST News

The ST has yet another new wave of remarkable and mind-boggling products on the way. Within our first hour at CES we saw a 4-megabyte memory board that goes into any ST without soldering, and the Hybrid Arts ADAP Soundtrack CD-quality stereo sampling and editing system that competes with the vastly more expensive Synclavier and Fairlight in high-end MIDI.

Micro D of Canada was showing a prototype 2/4Mb memory upgrade board that is supposed to install inside any ST without soldering. The Data-Free Board will sell for \$159 without RAM chips. The 4-megabyte upgrade requires 32 chips and the 2Mb takes 16. The chips cost \$30 each from Micro D or you can shop for a better price on your own. Hybrid Arts, the king of Atari MIDI developers, was showing their \$1995 ADAP Soundtrack digital sampling system, which will be on sale in July. ADAP offers the sound quality of compact disks -- in true stereo if you get a dual hardware setup. On a stage in the Atari area, ADAP was in action -- effortlessly pulling selected portions off any tape and manipulating the sound in real-time with a simple visual interface. Sounds could be played back in reverse, cut and

pasted, stretched, faded and otherwise manipulated, as fast as you could click a mouse.

Frank Foster of Hybrid Arts told Antic that Tom Hudson is looking into the ADAP math co-processor box for speeding up certain math-intensive operations of his graphics software (DEGAS, CAD-3D) such as ray tracing.

Springboard was showing their little-publicized ST conversion of Certificate Maker at the Atari booth.

Shelbourne Software's 3D Breakthrough, the first ST game using the Stereotek 3D Glasses, was a spectacular sight. You move through an elaborate maze by shooting your way through flashy barriers. The disk will also include a non-3D version that doesn't require glasses.

What looked like a very powerful and easy-handling 2-D drafting and drawing program was being demonstrated by Xetec of Salina, Kansas (makers of the Grafix AT which has been reviewed in Antic). SCAD gives you pages for 16 ST drawings in RAM. All commands can be operated from GEM or from the keyboard. The \$99.95 program is due in September and will not be copy-protected. Page sizes can be defined as large as 32 X 32 inches and many powerful graphics editing tools are built-in. SCAD can convert images into DEGAS format. We'll also be reviewing Xetec's new Printer Enhancer, a \$249.95 buffer/switcher with 8 built-in type fonts.

A software team from Venezuela was showing Mastercad 3-D, a \$199.95 program that converts any 2-D image into real 3-D and seems quite easy to operate. The current version requires 1Mb and monochrome. Final U.S. distribution is still being set.

Passport Designs, a leading MIDI software house, is rushing to convert its first ST product -- Master Tracks Pro, a high-powered, user-friendly 64-track sequencer that has been winning rave reviews on the Macintosh this spring. The Passport CES team told Antic that three out of four visitors to their booth wanted this product on the ST instead of the Mac.

Computereyes, a 1986 Antic Award Winner, is being shown at CES in an inexpensive \$149.95 monochrome version (it can produce gray scales on the color monitor). This is the latest Atari video digitizer from Digital Vision. Their ST color unit will be reviewed in the August 1987 issue of Antic.

Another specialized new use for the ST is to run a graphics database for serious chessplayers. Scisys of London is showing two versions of ST Chessbase -- the software that current World Champion Garry Kasparov has been using to prepare himself for tournaments.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



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THE FUTURE OF ATARI 8-BIT  
PUBLISHING  
A COMPUERVE SIG\*ATARI CONFERENCE

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Edited transcript by:

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(SYSOP dick) <Swinging Gavel> BANG! OK, I'm not going to formally introduce everybody -- it'd take 15 minutes. We're here today to talk about the future of Atari Publishing and we have the CREAM of the industry today! Does anybody have a short opening statement they'd like to make?

(John @ Explorer) I think there is a future for Atari Publishing, because, apparently, as we've all seen in the past few months of stock issues, rising prices and new product announcements, there is apparently a future for Atari itself.

(SYSOP dick) It's been a long time since we've heard death of Atari rumors!

(NORM) Antic, ANALOG, Explorer, Compute!, I use Ataris in the classroom, yet I see very little serious educational programs, utilities, articles in your magazines. I keep searching and hoping!! Any...???

(John @ Explorer) ANALOG, Antic, ourselves, and I believe the other magazines, have made a concerted effort in the past six months to increase coverage of educational issues. Quite frankly, however, I think my colleagues will agree with me that educational software, particularly software based in a coherent curriculum, that is consistent educational software of some real value is exceedingly difficult to track down. There is a real subculture, and not a highly structured one, that teachers are using as a resource for Atari-related educational tools, but the situation isn't pretty. What, if I may ask, are your personal goals as an educator in using Atari computers?

(NORM) Merci, John! Word processing in composition writing, electronic workbook, modem communication for languages, fun programs to add zip to the classroom teaching/learning.

(Clay @ ANALOG) I think that what John was trying to say is that we all look to our mailbox for the content of the magazine. Few people have the skills in both teaching and programming/writing to come up with publishable educational software or articles. We get lots of pseudo-educational programs -- the same old math drills and such that were cliches 5 years ago. I would say to Norm that, if he has something in mind and can present it in a publishable form, ANALOG will be happy to send him a contract.

(Tom R. Halfhill) I think Clay has made the point I wanted to make. The material that magazines publish is largely determined by the material which is submitted. If Atari users wish to see more coverage in a certain area, or more coverage in general, they should submit more material to the magazines.

(SYSOP Dick) As an 8-bit user, I've grown concerned about the fact that many of my favorite 8-bit magazines have been having 16-bit babies. Does the birth of these new magazines signal a diminishing level of support.

(Clay @ ANALOG) Dick, Dick, Dick... I can't believe people are still asking that question. ANALOG computing (the magazine) is our bread and butter! There's no way in the world that we're going to let it slide in favor of ST-Log. We are very excited by the possibilities offered us with a new computer and a new magazine. How could we not be? But as long as there's 8-bit computers out there, there'll be ANALOG Computing, and I think you can see that the quality of the magazine hasn't slipped (we're a little late, but we're catching up!)

(Tom/Rhett (COMPUTE!)) Magazine support depends on reader interest. When a magazine notices that readership is declining, and submissions are declining, then it must decide if the current level of support should be maintained. At COMPUTE!, we receive user group newsletters from Atari clubs all over the country, and have noticed that a major issue in Atari user groups today is the fear of declining support for the 8-bit Ataris. Newsletter editors complain of a lack of 8-bit articles submitted, and of a lack of attendance. If a magazine perceives the same drop in interest, naturally it will evaluate its coverage. Atari 8-bit users should maintain their interest in reading the magazines and submitting programs to help guarantee continued support.

(John @ Explorer) I don't perceive a falling off of interest in 8-bit material as my colleagues have suggested; but what I have noticed is a very drastic and upsetting falling-off



of advertising support for eight-bit product. Being real for a second, it's advertising -- i.e. the marketplace, that determines the market, and ultimately weighs on the content of a magazine. Those of us who, like Explorer, have not brought out separate 16-bit sub-units or books, but who support both machines in our pages, are striving to maintain a balance reflecting readership while that balance is continually thrown off by revenue analysis.

(Erik @ Kyan) Well...seems everybody is calling the ST magazines 'sub-units' and 'babies,' but to me they seem a lot better than the magazines they broke free from and feature a lot more professional material, not assuming the reader is a total beginner (START for instance, has more power-user/programmer geared articles).

(BARTENDER) The future of 8-bit seems dim to me as an 8-bit user. As even my regular issue of Antic seems to overrun with ST stuff. I have to read my magazine closely to be sure I don't try to load an ST file from the disk I just bought for my 8-bit. I retail Atari products and Antic is no longer one of those as sales fell sharply.

(Charlie @ ANTIC) I agree that the backbone of the editorial sections of a magazine are governed by it's mailbox, but it's also governed by it's wallet. When I joined ANTIC 3-4 years ago, we had 7 members producing Antic (writers editors and programmers). Today, there are three people doing the same job (and at that, we're also helping with Antic's OTHER magazines.) Two days ago, we had an in-office discussion about the ST vs. 8-bit. The problem was trying to identify the FUTURE 8-bit market. "Who," we pondered, "was going to buy an 8-bit machine when the 16-bits could do so much more, yet don't cost that much more." Apparently, hardware and software manufacturers feel likewise, did ANYONE see 8-bit products at WCCF or Hannover?

(CRAIG) I have a 8-bit and I like to add that the people are the ones you make your money off, so with the price of \$120 for the XE/XL, you can see what computer people will buy. Thank you.

(Clay @ ANALOG) I don't see that the 8-bit audience, in general, is falling. But the point was previously made, and I agree, that 8-bit software support and thus advertising \$\$\$ ARE falling off. I think all the publishers here will agree that there's two main reasons why we include a small amount of ST related material in our "8-bit" magazines. The first is because we truly believe that most 8-bit users are interested in the 16-bit computers and would like to be kept informed. Secondly -- and this gets back to the fall of 8-bit software support -- putting ST articles in the magazine attracts more advertising \$\$\$ and a magazine MUST have that income. I think the major challenge the 8-bit magazines face now, as far as content goes, is finding original, unused ideas. How many times can you publish an article on how to redefine character sets?

(Mark @ Supra) Ok, responding to the problem of advertising dollars falling off; the market is fast shrinking. The amount of time to develop a good product, write docs, get advertising going, is a long time; anywhere from 3 months (if you are lucky), to a year. So we, as a manufacturer in deciding on new products to do, must look a year ahead at the market. At this time we are taking the point of view that we can not afford to produce a new product strictly for the 8-bit market, but rather if we can move a product over to the 8-bit line, then it will be moved over. Case in point is our sub \$200 2400 baud modem. It would have never been developed for the 8-bit line, but since it is an easy matter to move it over, it will be produced. Also in talking to software offers, piracy is a main concern, plus the shrinking market.

(Jack @ JOURNAL) Devil's Advocate position for a second. I believe that the 8-bit user begins to perceive his market as "disappearing" due, in part, to the "splitting off" of the magazines, and this tends to be made more obvious to the advertiser, into a narrowing circle. Do the 8-bit users out there really still care, or do they feel that it's only a "matter of time" before they either move "up" or "out?" I know that at the local users group level, we have discussed the division of the group, several times, and each time, the 8-bit people want to REMAIN as a part of the larger group. Perhaps some of the publications have created their own petard, in making what was originally believed (and may, eventually prove to be) a WISE decision.

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(ROBIN) Hello. This is a question for all the magazines. I'm a new member of AtariSISG and have been reading up on all the messages. I'm wondering why we never see anything about this SISG's sysops in the magazines??? The work that these individuals deserves to be recognized.

Joel/Rhett==>Would you like to do a centerfold of Sysop Dick Brudzynski?

(Erik @ Kyan) haha

(Clay @ ANALOG) Hey! We already got a bid on that!!

(Tom/Rhett (COMPUTE!)) Antic made a good point about the future of the 8-bits. We have thought the same thing. If 3-bit coverage seems to be dropping off, I think there are a few reasons. First, the ST magazines can provide better coverage because they have the advantage of a bound-in (or optional) disk. This allows larger programs, and programs which are written in good compiled languages. Also, we noticed a decrease in quantity and quality of Atari articles soon after the ST came out. Both the articles submitted to us and to other magazines (sorry, guys, just being honest). I think this is due to a migration of the best 8-bit programmers to the ST and Amiga. The best programmers will always gravitate to the hottest, latest machines. The 8-bit market also lost some very good programmers to the C-64, Mac, and other computers that sold better or were more attractive to programmers for various reasons.

Bill C.) Well, since Atari is supposedly making so much money on the sales of 130XE's and other 8-bit hardware, including sales to me, guys). I wish, no, DEMAND, that they get into the ring on this software availability..

John @ Explorer) \$\$\$\$\$Thanks, Bill\$\$\$\$\$

Bill C.) If they would push what they sell with the publishers, we wouldn't be in such bad straits. As a loyal Atari user, I expect this kind of support on their part, specially if they want to continue to get my bucks!!!!!!

John @ Explorer) Well, first off, to answer Bill, Atari is in the ring on this software availability thing. Virtually the only truly substantial 8-bit product I've seen is been coming, hook or crook, off the assembly lines at Atari -- this is excepting the slow but steady trickle of quality software from a number of super-loyal software houses that have stuck by the machines. But the real point I'd like to make is I think we -- all of us -- are perhaps suffering from a failure of the imagination here. As Bill says, Atari is selling a whole lot of 8-bit machines, and is continuing formal support for the hardware the operating system, peripherals and software -- all of the magazines here probably represent a combined subscriber base of something on the order of 300,000 to half a million, with lots of overlap -- but there are millions and millions of 8-bit machines out there. As a whole the 8-bit side of the

industry, and that includes Atari, seems to be able to sell to these people, but not to reach them on a consistent basis. It's extremely puzzling to us.

(Bill C.) I don't want Atari to publish. I want them to push other publishers to port stuff over to the 8-bit Atari.

(JOHN NAGY) Our club, CHADS, has seen the same migration of users to ST, most 8-bit users have seemed to accept the idea that they are all ST owners that haven't gotten one yet. This isn't really necessary, but the Atari company and all of us following behind, have sort of allowed the 8-bit to lose any focus as a viable machine. There is a real reason to use an 8-bit, and not to get an ST other than just because it is cheap. There are many things (games not being the least of them) that the 8-bit can do fine. WE NEED TO PUSH THE 8-bit as a real machine at the retail, or else we see it fall out of notice. Too many believe that the 8-bit is even out of production!.

(BARTENDER) The general tone seems to reflect a change in attitude by Atari supporters towards the ST line. Yet the Atari 8-bit computer is by far the best dollar investment in the computer market. Most replacement parts are available for less than \$5.00 each except for some special items. And the wealth of already existing software and many years of past issues of many publications, make this computer truly a landmark in 8-bit HISTORY. How are we, as experienced programmers, to expect a 13 year old new user to even begin programming when we use a zero page larger than the computer we learned on?

(SYSOP dick) I've noticed the steady growth of on-line publishing by the magazines and newsletters. Antic at CIS, ANALOG at Delphi, ZMAG everywhere! Even Omni and Playboy. Does this signal a decline in the value of the printed word? A new way to serve readers? What does the shift to on-line publishing mean. I'd appreciate any thoughts from the magazines and newsletters on the shift to on-line publishing.

(Charlie @ ANTIC) (Ooops! Theme change....)

(SYSOP dick) Not necessarily, Charlie. I want your thoughts on ANYTHING!

(Charlie @ ANTIC) Agreed, there's been a change in attitude, but in a different way. In a recent ANTIC ONLINE survey, we found that the largest chunk of users want BUSINESS software and prefer Product Reviews and New Product announcements to type-in programs. (At the CompuServe booth at WCCF virtually EVERYONE I spoke with wanted to learn about computer business applications...only a handful asked about programming SISG (forums). There are only a handful of RELIABLE business application programs for the 8-bit. So as ST prices continue to plummet and software lists and catalogs grow thicker and heavier, WHO is going to buy



tomorrow's 8-bit machines? Personally I love my 800 (if not for it, I'd not get a paycheck), but it looks like the tides are shifting.

(Joe T.) First for all the publishers: Why is it that the programs for most other machines have well written graphics, text, etc., but when they are changed to Atari, they only look slightly better than the original Pong game? It looks as if they are thinking "We'll just make a quick version for the Atari machines just to keep those few subscriptions."

(Ripp) Piracy is a major contributor to that!

(Joe T.) I understand about piracy, but a lot of the type in programs that include a picture on how it will look on different machines shows that not much effort was put into the Atari versions.

(THOMAS E. REED) Having suffered through a girlfriend with a Radio Shack Color Computer, both of which, thank the Lord, are now gone. I was surprised by the tremendous advertising support for the Coco magazines from local dealers. Why not that same kind of support for Atari magazines? Also, since so many users are upgrading their machines with extra memory, how about some discussion of Atari upgrades in the magazines? Lots of people love their 8-bits. Mine does everything I need in a computer, and I don't see a reason to change.

(SYSOP dick) Clay==> (Maybe you can give us an idea why ANALOG went online and Tom/Rhett can give us an idea why COMPUTE hasn't gone online)

(Clay @ ANALOG) Well, I wasn't at ANALOG when the original TCS went on-line but the reason, I'm sure was that it gave people an alternative to a disk subscription. It's a lot nicer to be able to download those specific programs you're interested in, than to put up the cash for a disk subscription. We moved to Delphi because supporting the TCS became an overwhelming task (over 2000 subscribers on the TCS), plus we needed the extra disk space Delphi could provide. Once we had the programs on-line, it was only logical to port the text files over from the typesetter and put them on-line, too. Now a change of subject. I wanted to say before that 8-bit users have one sure way to protect their future -- and that is to BUY! Buy software, buy hardware, buy magazines. As long as there's money to be made, the computer will be supported. We have to feed our kids, too. Though we love our work, we have to bring home a paycheck.

(John @ Explorer) Answering a few questions: as to the issue of how magazines tend to support 8-bit systems with type-in stuff ported from other machines, the gentleman who spoke was absolutely right in his estimation of the mental process in most cases. However there are notable exceptions --

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

# Computer Outpost

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# ATARI SCUTTLEBITS

Bob Kelly

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## Computer Market .... Random Observations

Have you visited a computer magazine store lately? If not, go take a close look. Times are a-changing and some harsh adjustments may be on the way.

One of my most enjoyable pleasures connected with home computing over the years has been reading the monthly computer magazines, whether Atari specific or those for other popular computers. The store I generally visit is located in the financial district of downtown Washington, D.C. It offered the widest assortment of computer magazines of any store I knew. One wall in the store was 30+ feet long full of computer magazines. Each individual rack on the wall was capable of holding not just one magazine as is frequently the case in many stores, but 10 to 15. Over time, the magazine overflow spilled onto the floor and to other parts of the store. It was home computer magazine heaven. PC Week always appeared to be most in demand with sales numbering in the several 100's per issue. The Atari related magazines didn't fare too bad with Antic probably the largest seller at 50 to 75 issues per month.

Lately, this scene has radically changed. In the last eight months or so, the space occupied by computer magazines has been reduced by at least half. In addition, the number of magazines per rack is down. For those magazines still on the shelf, many copies of a single issue are now distributed over multiple racks rather than in one rack as before. Coupling this experience with other information I obtained, it appears computer magazine sales are once again declining.

What does this mean to you? With computer magazine sales trending down, another wave of magazine failures is on the horizon. As for Atari specific magazines, the commercial publications which may be in trouble are primarily directed at the 8 bit market. The likely candidates for failure are no secret! Also, look for some small ST specific magazines to go under. Your bottom line; pause and reflect before writing that check to renew your magazine(s) this year. After this reflection, don't fail to subscribe to those you need, lest they disappear.

## Atari News & Views

In April, Atari announced it will be selling \$75 million in convertible Eurobonds to European investors only. Standard and Poor's announced it had assigned a single B-rating to the debentures. On April 14th, Moody's Investors Service assigned an initial rating of a single B3 to the

Atari Eurobond issue. Moody, in issuing this rating, stated, "Atari's product line is limited and significant amounts of funds will be required for capital spending and research and development to sustain and broaden the company's narrow product line." Translation, Moody believes Atari is a risky investment. However, you can be a winner when investing in Atari provided they diversify the product line which, in turn, is a function of how much R & D spending occurs.

Some current financial data on Atari follows:

Fiscal Year	EPS\$	Total Revenue	Net Income	Share Book Value
86	1.06	258.1	25.0	2.31
85	.62	141.9	(14.3)	.....

\$ EPS = earnings per share

Atari's net income for 1986 was \$25 million versus a (\$14.3) million loss in 1985. As a result of this performance, the price for Atari common stock rose and appears to have settled in the area of \$25 per share, an increase of more than 60% this year. In comparison, the computer industry witnessed a rise of only 33%.

For those of you who believe Atari's low selling prices translate into below average financial returns relative to other firms in the computer industry, the following table should correct this impression:

Ratios	Atari Corp.	Computer/periph. Industry
Profit margin	9.7%	5.7%
Return on common equity	NE	10.1%
Return on total assets	18.1%	5.9%
Revenue to assets	186%	104%

Source: Dow Jones

As can be seen, Atari's profit margin is more than 40% higher than the industry average and look at the relationship of revenue to assets. The motto may be "Power without the Price" to the consumer but to the senior officers and stockholders the motto is more like "Power is in the Profit Margin." Yes Virginia, Atari is a business and is very good at it.

Finally, when are people going to stop talking as if Warner Communications no longer owns any portion of Atari. The fact is Warner owns 30% of Atari with Jack Tramiel holding the controlling portion of common stock, roughly 54%.



## Timeworks

In my last column, I pointed out how Timeworks' tax program, Sylvia Porter's Swiftax, was not recommended for purchase - a dog, to be explicit. Timeworks has another program which is a WINNER! This judgement is not mine alone; but many have found DATA MANAGER ST to be a program easy to use and flexible, permitting use in varied applications. You would think that Timeworks would do all to promote the sale of this product. Well, you are wrong.

Recently, a close friend of mine called Timeworks inquiring when they planned to introduce a utility that would permit transferring DIF files from other databases into Data Manager ST (DIF stands for Data Interchange Format, a quasi industry standard file format). The response from Timeworks at the other end of the telephone was, "We have had hundreds of calls requesting such a utility. There are currently no plans to make such a capability available to the ST user."

A response such as this illustrates why so many software firms in the past went belly-up. What is amazing is that this attitude still exists today. With a program that could significantly add to total sales, Timeworks should tell the user where to go rather than to go to ....

## Electronic Arts

For all the "old" 8 bit computer owners, Electronic Arts (ECA) is a magic name. This company burst on the scene in 1983 with such outstanding software as M.U.L.E., Archon, and Pinball Construction Set. All of these programs received critical acclaim, brought in substantial sums of money and made Trip Hawkins, the founder of ECA, something of a celebrity.

Trip, after making a good portion of his fortune selling software to Atari owners, abandoned Atari when hard times hit. Hawkins announced that Amiga was the home computer of the future and, by inference, Atari stood little chance, even with Jack Tramiel. So, Trip had ECA produce software for the Amiga. The Amiga has not lived up to Trip's prediction (one down). In fact, it's the Amiga that's captured only a small portion of home computer market sales while Atari's grew significantly.

Trip, seeing the error of his ways, recently began to produce such "outstanding" pieces of software for the Atari ST as Skyfox (two down).

Undaunted, Trip now believes Starglider to be "the only really outstanding game for the ST" (three down). Thus, he has contracted with Jez San of Argonaut Software to market future programs under the Electronic Arts logo.

Personally, I think Trip is on a trip and it may end abruptly. Given Trip's attitude, I have successfully and

with little regret avoided buying ST software marketed specifically under the Electronic Arts logo. This guy must think we're all fools. What did Lincoln say about fooling people some of the time, but not all of the time? Unfortunately, he is taking over a company that produced some of the best software for the Atari - Batteries Included (BI). ECA is purchasing the rights to the BI brand name as well as the rights to market current products. This presents a moral dilemma which I have not yet resolved.

## User Hints

While using my ST for the past year and half, I have accumulated what I consider to be some very helpful public domain utilities/accessories. I was asked to name a few of the more important. They are:

ScrSaver.ACC - Blacks out screen without turning off CRT (monitor) switch. A great addition to whatever word processing or database program you may use.

Coldboot.TOS - Click on this little 56 byte program and it cold starts your ST without having to turn the computer switch off and on (from Dec., 1986 Compute ST magazine). Great for clearing accessories out of memory.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

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**The Animator/Aegis \$79.95**  
If you've seen the great MARS-SCALL ST-COLOR graphics in SDI by Mindscape, then you already have a good idea what this program can do. And it's so user-friendly that even we Martians didn't need to look at the instruction manual! Features include "tweening", which lets you create the 1st & last cells, and the computer does all the work in between. Highly recommended.

**The News Station \$26.95**  
Finally a typesetting program that is easy to use, mixes graphics with text, & prints what you see on your screen - to scale! REQUIRES: 8-bit Atari, 48k, Epson/Gemini/Panasonic or Prowriter printers.

**ALSO AVAILABLE:**  
QWIK PIX PC MACH II, 1020 PRINTERS  
PR-CONNECTION, US DOUBLER, RAMBO XL  
AUATEX 1200 & 1200HC, VOLKSMODEMS



# LET'S DO IT IN PASCAL (PART 7)

by Larry Richardson

Before I get into this installment I want to apologize for having taken so long in writing another article, but I currently don't have a lot of free time to use my computer. Also, I have a new position at work and I spend anywhere from 4 to 9 hours a day on various computers at work programming, word processing, and manipulating data bases of electrical components and wires. Therefore, when I get home, one of the last things I want to do is turn on my computer. However, when I do turn on my computer, about 40% of the time is putting together these articles for you SCAT members, the rest is writing letters or managing household finances. So now I'm going to chastise you. If you look back over the last few issues of the SCAT newsletter, you won't see very many articles written by SCAT members.

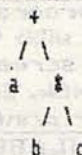
When I joined SCAT, the organization helped me out tremendously. I am now trying to return the favor. There have been a lot of people in SCAT, and yet I have seen articles written by only a small percentage of the people I have seen there regularly since the first meeting I attended. If everyone would write one article, even a short one, we would have a newsletter that would rival the size of ANTIC and ANALOG combined, or at least a years worth of articles. So come on, get with it. (Ed. Note: Well said, Larry!)

I only write these article because I like to program in Pascal. I have had no formal training in the language, I picked it up the same way I picked up BASIC, by reading and using, and solving problems. However, I prefer Pascal because it is so easy to figure out what a program is doing a year later when I want to make some enhancements to the program.

Well, I hope you studied the last installment thoroughly (I've sure given you enough time) because I'm not going to review anything before proceeding.

This time the subject is trees. Trees use linked lists to form their structure. An example tree would be a family tree. You would be in one position, your parents would be the two branches, and their parents would be further branches, etc. Trees are also used to build parsers. The example I am going to use is a simple mathematical parser.

Suppose you want to parse the expression  $a+b*c$ . This could be represented in tree format as follows:

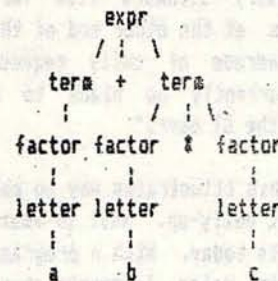


When a compiler parses a program, its syntax must be correct. Some grammar must be defined in the compiler for parsing. For this example lets define the grammar as follows:

expr is a term (+ or - a term)  
term is a factor (\* a factor)  
factor is a letter or an expr  
letter is "a" or "b" or "c"

where the items in parenthesis are optional.

Now our tree looks like this:



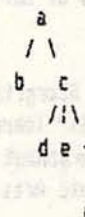
Messy, huh?

Now lets define (in precise mathematical terms what a tree is.

A tree  $T$  is a finite set of one or more nodes such that there is a specially designated node  $t$  an element of  $T$  (called the root of  $T$ ) and  $T$ -element  $t$  is partitioned into disjoint subsets  $T_1, T_2, \dots, T_n$ , each of which is itself a tree (called a subtree of the root  $t$ ). Who said this was going to be easy?! Anyway what this means is that if you have a tree, the tree has a root that can be removed and the parts that are left over are still trees.

For example, consider your family tree described previously. If you were removed from it, there would be two separate trees, your mother's and your father's. These trees are subsets of your tree.

Unfortunately, this example is exactly backwards from the way trees are normally described in that the root of a tree is called the parent, and the branches are the children. Example:



a is the parent, b and c are the children. c is the parent



of d, e, and f.

Now, if a linked list were to be constructed to represent this type of structure, then the node would need to contain data variable and three pointers, one for each of the branches (node c would use all three). However, if a node had four branches, this structure would have to be expanded. This would waste a lot of variable space pointing at nothing. In order to avoid problems of this type, it is necessary to restrict this to binary trees.

Binary trees have nodes with two or less children. A binary may also contain no nodes at all.

NOW, lets get into some Pascal. A binary tree definition is recursive.

```
type
  treepointer = ^tree;
  tree =
    record
      data : char;
      left_branch : treepointer;
      right_branch : treepointer;
    end;
  var
    root : treepointer;
```

Now, using our first example tree, a+b\*c, let's determine how many nodes there are. The root node contains '+'. The left subtree contains the root 'a'. Its left subtree is empty. Its right subtree is empty. The right subtree of '+' contains the root '\*'. Its left subtree contains 'b'. 'b's left subtree is empty. 'b's right subtree is empty. The right subtree of '\*' contains 'c'. The left subtree of 'c' is empty, and the left subtree of 'c' is empty. Let's see if I can clarify this a bit.

```
count
1 1:visit root '+'
  2:visit the left subtree
2 2.1:visit the root 'a'
  2.2:visit the left subtree (empty)
  2.3:visit the right subtree (empty)
  3:visit the right subtree
3 3.1:visit the root '*'
  3.2:visit the left subtree
4 3.2.1:visit the root 'b'
  3.2.2:visit the left subtree (empty)
  3.2.3:visit the right subtree (empty)
  3.3:visit the right subtree
5 3.3.1:visit the root 'c'
  3.3.2:visit the left subtree (empty)
  3.3.3:visit the right subtree (empty)
```

I suppose this looks really difficult to program, but it isn't. Using our record above, a simple RECURSIVE routine

can be written to count the nodes.

```
procedure nodecount(root:treepointer;var count:integer);
begin
  if root<> nil then
    begin
      count:=count+1;
      nodecount(root^.left_branch,count);
      nodecount(root^.right_branch,count);
    end;
end;
```

Now, what's the disadvantage of this system? A lot of memory is taken up by allocating memory to nils. In this example there are 6 elements and 6 nils. There are methods to minimize this problem, but I haven't been able to figure them out yet.

## COMING OUT OF THE CLOSET

by Larry Richardson

How many of you know people who own a closet ATARI. I didn't know any, I thought. Then one day when I was talking to my boss I mentioned that I thought I could do something easier on my ATARI than on the IBM PC AT I use at work. He asked me about my ATARI and then told me he had one that he had typed in a couple of short programs on, but he found it too difficult to use. He had won the computer at a company function. It was a 600. He had no cassette drive for it, didn't know that memory expansions existed, and no programs. So it sat in a closet.

My boss has a 5 year old son. I have several educational programs that I purchased for my daughter who is 2 (some of them are a little advanced for her) some of which are cartridge based, and several cartridge games. So, I loaned a few of these programs to him to try out. He took the first one home and the next day he was thrilled. His kid loved it. I told him that that wasn't even a very good example and I loaned him several more.

The results of this are that now my boss is planning to upgrade his memory, possibly buy a disk drive, and is definitely into the software market. This helps us all, it increases the number of people buying ATARI software which increases the amount of software which is produced for our machines, because it sells.

I have done some more investigating and have found that there are several other ATARI owners where I work. Again, many of these are closet ATARI's. I wonder if this one guy would be interested in a spreadsheet, particularly when I show him it's faster than his office mate's Apple?



With Chessbase Sr., every recent tournament game of an upcoming opponent can be fed into the database and instantly examined from a vast variety of viewpoints to pinpoint potential weak points of play. You can see how an opponent reacts to any standard style of opening or strategy. Chessbase Jr. works with the expensive Leonardo world-class chess computer and the ST. U.S. distribution for all these products was being finalized at CES.

An add-on to Printmaster Plus, the Print Shop workalike from Unison World, will be a Fonts and Borders disk. Price is not yet set.

Broderbund is jumping into the ST marketplace with Art Director and Film Director, a DEGAS-quality paint program that will be packaged together with an animation module for \$79.95. This software, originally designed by the Hungarians who did ST Battlezone, is expected to ship in August. Features include: rescale, stretch, distort, bend, bulge, spin, perspective, scroll and spin.

Not quite as far along is the ST version of Broderbund's all-time best seller, Print Shop. It is due this fall at \$49.95 and will be similar to the sophisticated Macintosh version. Also coming from Broderbund this fall is the ST Karateka at \$34.95.

Timeworks Desktop Publisher this fall will join the company's ST word processor, spreadsheet and database software.

Spitfire 1940 is an ST flight combat game coming from Avalon Hill this summer. We also picked up an 8-bit review-copy of their Guderian war game.

And back at the bustling Atari booth, we got a look at Bentley Bear Goes To School -- a new ST educational series programmed in Israel and featuring the lovable bruin from the Crystal Castle arcade game. Four titles for grades K-6 are to be marketed within 30 days and there will eventually be some 20 in the series. The animation in each title such as Magical Mathematics is of very high quality and the packages will sell for \$19.95 apiece.

#### XE GAME SYSTEM

\*\*\* Flying High With Atari \*\*\* This year's summer CES brings us a NEW XE game system. It's really a 65XE in a game machine's clothing -- but a heck of a machine it is! It is the first computer that can be accurately described as CUTE! With detachable keyboard, you can now compute in the comfort of your own lap. Missile command is BUILT IN. The system will come WITH Flight Simulator II in a 128K cartridge, as well as BUG HUNT, Atari's first light gun game. This is a REAL machine folks, and it looks excellent. All of Atari's classics as well as some superb new game releases will be

coming out in new super bank switch cartridges -- including Battlezone. John Skruch showed me a final beta test, and it is a KILLER!

The Game System is essentially a two-piece 65XE computer that costs as much as a 130XE. But instead of 128K memory, you get a light-gun, a joystick and three games -- Flight Simulator II on cartridge, Missile Command in ROM and a pistol game called Bug Hunt. At least 18 arcade and disk best-sellers are now promised for Atari cartridge by Christmas, including 1 On 1, Gato, Midnight Magic, Karateka, Choplifter and Blue Max. Most titles are to sell for \$19.95 each.

Atari Software Director John Skruch says the XE can get as much as 256K on a bank-switching cartridge. Flight Simulator II only required 128K. Two hard-hitting TV commercials for the Game System were on Display. The system is designed to be sold in separate pieces overseas. Eventually the light-gun will be available in the USA as an 8-bit peripheral. An ST mouse will work on the XE Game System in trackball mode -- CONTROL-T.

#### GAME GALLERY

Microprose had a customized Link Trainer "flying" on the CES floor as it was piloted with the new Gunship helicopter simulation. The ST version is still under development.

Mindscape, which hosted a Sunday rock oldies concert for 1,000 (Bo Diddley, Sam & Dave) showed two \$29.95 ST color games designed in England. Q-Ball is a 3-D billiards game played inside a cube where you can adjust the gravity and line up your shots off any wall. Plutos is a shootout where your rocket flies over the scrolling surface of the huge enemy mothership and attempts to destroy it.

From England's Psygnosis, creators of the visually awesome graphic adventure game Brataccas, comes another lushly-detailed extravaganza. Barbarian moves a Conan-type hero through an a vast, scrolling underground kingdom -- color only -- where monsters and hordes of enemy guards must be overcome on every screen.

Electronic Arts is starting to crank out some ST titles too. An enhanced version of Music Construction Set -- with MIDI -- is due in July for \$39.95. Other new features are direct waveform editing and a jukebox playback mode.

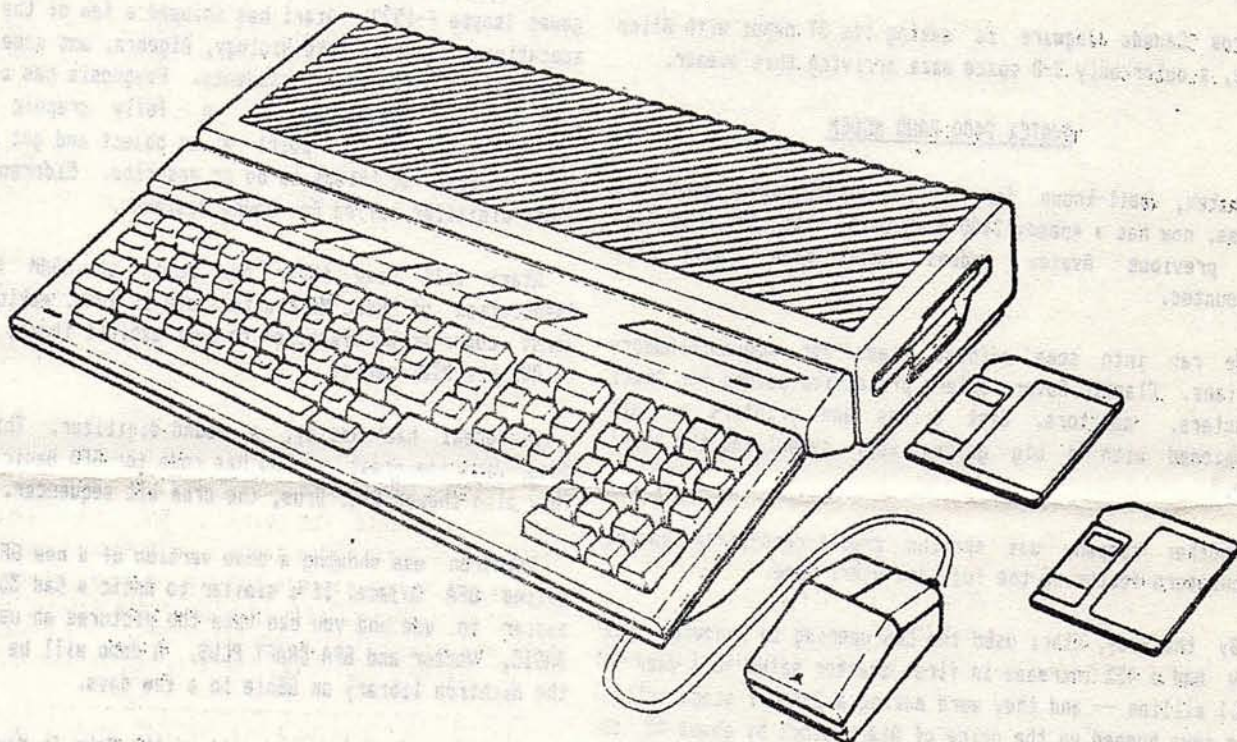
EA has also taken over distribution of the First Byte talking ST software. First releases are Mathtalk, a flashy arithmetic drill for youngsters, and a talking computer version of Mad Libs, the popular series of humor books where you add inappropriate words to prepared storylines.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



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SAF DATA SYSTEMS, 2217 W. 109th Street, Chicago, IL 60643 (312) 238-4348

The Only Personal Computer for Less than \$1 Per Kilobyte.



Still more from Electronic Arts, a kind of super-Diplomacy strategy game called Empire, where you conquer weaker parts of the world and force them to build weapons and raise new armies for your war machine. But your enemies are just as ruthless, and you can also start the game by re-drawing the map of the world to suit your own tastes.

Logical Design Works has a whole line of fast-moving ST gambling simulations for \$34.95 each. Vegas Gambler combines blackjack, roulette, slot machine and poker machine. Other titles available are Vegas Craps and Club Backgammon.

From Canada Jagware is making its ST debut with Alien Fires, a color-only 3-D space maze arriving this summer.

#### AVATEX 2400 BAUD MODEM

Avatex, well-known for its low-priced Hayes-compatible modems, now has a speedy 2400 baud unit. List price is \$319 but previous Avatex modems have been dramatically discounted.

We ran into some offbeat items for souvenir-hungry Atarians. Classic Covers offers protective covers for Atari computers, monitors, disk drives and printers -- all emblazoned with a big golden fuji symbol and the Atari name.

Another company was showing credit-card-sized pocket calculators featuring the fuji and Atari name.

By the way, Atari used the CES opening to announce that they had a 45% increase in first quarter sales this year -- \$65.1 million -- and they were making a 2-for-1 stock split. This news bumped up the price of Atari stock by about \$5, to over \$30 per share.

#### The PC Clone

Atari is showing the Atari PC at its booth at CES. It came from the far east on Thursday night and I believe it is an actual production model, not a prototype. That is encouraging. The only thing was that somewhere along the line, someone forgot to pack the keyboard or it got lost in transport...I'm not sure what the exact problem was...so Atari found an actual IBM PC keyboard and is running the Atari PC with that. So at least we know that there is keyboard compatibility!

The Atari PCs were shown, with some color/amber EGA monitors, and a hard drive as well. Atari isn't overly excited about these machines but sees the potential market and wants to meet it head on (to finance bigger and better STs?). The "MEGAs are on a boat, on their way from TAIWAN NOW", says Sam Tramiel. I got to play some Midi Maze with

Neil Harris and James Yee (of XANTH) -- what a BLAST! ICD is coming out with hard drives for the ST, with their usual flair for complete flexibility.

One small company had a strange package called Easel that let you put any DEGAS picture in place of the desktop background. Tends to slow down the system overall, though. Timeworks had a collection of utilities in the form of a desk accessory called Partner ST -- a Thesaurus is included. Broderbund announced Printshop, Karateka, and a combined version of Art Director with Film Director (yay!) -- they have committed to attending the Santa Clara Atari show. Looks like they're backing us in a big way.

Microprose is finishing up Gunship and one of their other games (maybe F-15??) Atari has shipped a few of the Arrakis educational programs like Biology, Algebra, and some others, aimed at middle school students. Psygnosis has a hot new game called Barbarian -- a fully graphic fantasy role-playing game -- point at an object and get a window with a list of things to do or describe. Eidersoft had a sound digitizer called Pro Sound Designer.

Atari will have their own booth at NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) late in June, making us the first computer manufacturer to ever exhibit there. We want to OWN the MIDI market.

Microdeal had Replay, a sound digitizer. This really does digitize great ... and has code for GFA Basic as well. They also showed Digi Drum, the drum kit sequencer.

MichTron was showing a demo version of a new GFA Product called GFA Object. It's similar to Antic's Cad 3D but much easier to use and you can take the pictures and use them in BASIC, Vector and GFA DRAFT PLUS. A demo will be posted in the Michtron library on GENie in a few days.

They are also showing all of the Make It Move demos. They attracted lots of attention. The prototype of Cashman also looked good. That game's addictive!!!

MichTron also said that their Resource Construction Set editor for GFA BASIC should be out sometime in July.

Atari was asked about 68020 machine at the CLAU5 dinner. They said that there will be no news on a 68020 machine until later. They are working on one to include UNIX, but it will be a 1988 product at best. There were no denials, but no details yet.

When asked about why there was no mention of the Mega, blitter or laser, Atari said that the people who buy at CES are mass merchants, not dealers. "We did not want to scare dealers by showing Megas there. We are about to head on the road to visit dealers face to face to sign up Mega dealers." It was confirmed to mean that not EVERY current 1040 dealer can carry Megas.



## ANNUAL ATARI ROAST

In its second year, the CES Monday night dinner of the icagoland Atari Users Group (CLAUG) has become the Atari community's de facto annual roast.

On the evening before CES's final day, CLAUG invites a bus load of executives and programmers from Atari and independent companies to dinner at a college dining hall in the western suburbs, about as far from town as O'Hare Airport.

After the visitors refuel themselves following a hectic day at the show, the event becomes a regular CLAUG meeting with every professional making a statement and answering questions.

This year Atari vice president Leonard Tramiel revealed that a 16-bit graphics workstation is in a fairly advanced stage of development. This would be compatible with the ST but much more powerful. He said that any 32-bit multitasking computer would need to run Unix, but it was a problem deciding which competing version of Unix would be best.

Marketing communications director Neil Harris stated that ST Word Perfect, due in July, runs five times faster than the bestselling IBM version.

Harris explained that Atari's top priority at this articular CES was to revitalize the 8-bit line by packaging a redesigned 65XE as a high-end game system, in direct competition with Nintendo and Sega. That's why the Mega ST and the Atari Laser Printer were not displayed this time. According to Harris, the XE Game System was receiving an enthusiastic early response from mass-market purchasing agents.

By the way, Atari is going back to Chicago in three weeks, where it will show off the ST's MIDI power and become the first personal computer company ever to exhibit at NAMM, the musical instrument industry's show.

## THE FUTURE OF ATARI 8-BIT PUBLISHING

(Continued from page 11)

Family Computing, for example, where I used to be Sr. Tech. Editor, had an in-house programming staff that were all rabid Atari programmers, so even though there was little interest in editorial coverage of the machines, per se, we always made sure that Atari 8-bits were covered with the best stuff we could put together. On the subject of "online editions," we're looking at a wholly new definition of the concept of magazines. What started as an "efficiency measure" -- something to render better service to current subscribers and readers mostly, has turned into something

quite different. Online editions are a new, more fluid medium than print can ever be.

(JOHN NAGY) Printed magazines are NOT dead, but they COST a lot to make. Onlines, like ZMAG can get out fast with the costs of production being taken over by the readers. This lets one try ones hand at publishing without the huge risks of advertising needed to pay for the big investment in printing and distribution. I do feel that magazines can't be replaced, as there can be no better way to be able to skip through an article or see what might be there for you. Onlines make you wade through all the stuff you DON'T want to get to the part you DO. But the mix we have been getting recently has improved both means of publishing.

(Ron [ZMAG]) John is correct in everything he stated. We produce an issue each week with the intention of providing information about printed magazines, CIS, and the information services for our readers. We have 100+ bbs systems carrying each issue. Many of which use the information for their local user group newsletters. John Nagy has been one the few who has provided information with the purpose of user group usage. We can get news out faster, but cannot provide the space printed forms do.

(jpp) At first there were general purpose computer magazines, then there were special purpose magazines, then came the IBM, and general purpose and IBM became the same. New users won't find out about ATARI and I suppose most of your readers already have Ataris. Why not start real general coverage magazine, leave the program listings for your online unless they are generally applicable. Also, the 8-bits are cheap and so good hackers would like to see hardware hacking articles.

(Mark @ Supra) Responding to online magazines and BBS. The whole idea of what a BBS is, and how it works, needs some new thinking. The biggest thing I see is that the terminal programs and the BBS service need to compliment each other, i.e. menus. I hate having to have the same info sent time and time again. I know that several services are working on this, but before BBSING can become useful for the general populous some user interfacing needs to be redone.

(Tom/Rhett (COMPUTE!)) We'd like to answer two earlier questions that seemed to be aimed at COMPUTE!: 1 -- The quality of programs translated to the Atari; 2 -- COMPUTE! online. First, it is easier to write a good, original program that takes advantage of the Atari's features if you start on the Atari. It's harder to translate a good program on another computer to the Atari. Also, it's a deadline problem, writing programs for many different machines. We also find it difficult to find enough good programmers for our needs. (In fact, we have had an opening for an Editorial Programmer for several months now, if anyone wants to apply.) As for the online question -- we have considered this for a couple of years but there always seem to be projects of higher priority to carry out first. For



example, we wanted to start our various disk services and the ST magazine. There are only so many new projects we can handle per year. Especially since it is so hard to find new staff people that meet our qualifications. We've hired four new people just in the past few weeks and still have seven openings we can't fill. This limits our ability to start new projects that require a lot of planning, thought, and manpower.

(Charlie @ ANTIC) Compared to its pen-and-ink counterpart, online publishing is in it's infancy (ANTIC ONLINE went live just a few years ago in '84). The snags and glitches which tend to make online magazines appear "user hostile" at times, are being corrected. In AOL, we've added "Direct Access" pages for people who (don't like menus, highlighted new features, and working to make the whole schmeer easier to use. QUESTION: What are the most important things an online magazine should provide?

(Charles @ ANALOG) As an answer to jpp's question about putting all listing on-line and removing them from the magazines, I feel that this is entirely infeasible to do for two reasons. The listings one finds while scanning through the pages of any computer magazine -- while not always being of interest to everyone -- are there for a reason other than typing in. They are there to also read and learn from. You might not want the whole program but there just might be a few lines of code that you can and will use. Another reason has to do with the first time user without a lot of money. That kid next door who buys a few magazines each and every month from his paper route money, usually can't afford a disk subscription or the on-line connect charges for download time that the services charge. He is perfectly willing to type in these programs, and many do so (as I can tell by the phone calls we get each month about typing errors.)

(BARTENDER) I have one question left for all the magazines. Where is the stuff you guys read to allow people like Steven Kitchen to learn to write software as refined as his are?

(John @ Explorer) Tristram Shandy, by Lawrence Sterne.

#### ATARI SCUTTLEBITS (Continued from Page 13)

Moustrap.ACC - Controls cursor preventing drop down menus from accidentally appearing. To display menus, the right mouse button must be depressed (from Start Magazine, Vol.1, #2). This accessory does not work with any program that requires use of the right button on the mouse such as FLASH.

DCopy19.TTP - This is a shareware program (\$5). It copies, erases, hides, locks, renames, de-arcs files, formats disks and lots more. An all-in-one gem.

These programs are available either on your local BBS,

CompuServe, GEnie, or the SCAT library.

#### JUNE MINUTES

The June 1987 meeting of the SCAT Atari users group was called to order by president Jeff Williams at 11:20 A.M. Saturday, June 6, 1987 at the College of DuPage.

The meeting opened with announcing the officers and description of this month's library disks. For the 8-bits, this month's diskette contains various educational programs which includes three different typing testers. On this month's ST diskette, there are some GDOS fonts to use with programs which take advantage of different fonts, such as Degas.

Cris Cosentino has found a new meeting place for the the MIDI Special Interest Group. It will be held at Coz Computers on Thursday the 18th at 8:00pm. There will be plenty of synthesizers and computers to make it an interesting meeting.

Kirk Osterman gave a report on the CES show, discussing what Atari and other companies had for Atari computers. Atari reported 80 percent profit for the year of 1986, announced a stock split, commercials for TV, and showed off some new hardware. There will be a new double density drive with a new DOS written by OSS and the XE game system, which comes with Missile Command and Flight Simulator II with added scenery on a 256K cartridge.

After the break, Ken Reid talked about Turbo Basic for the XL's and XE's, which will run all Atari Basic programs at three times the speed. Turbo Basic also allows the user to execute DOS commands in the editor. Members can get Turbo Basic in the public domain library, number 58.1.

To close the meeting, Allen Reeve demonstrated his publishing program, Newstation ST. The ST user can create pages of text using different sized fonts, can include Neochrome/Degas clip art, and PrintMaster icons.

The meeting adjourned at about 2:45 P.M.



# NOTICES

General meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month at 11:00am. See the calendar for dates. The summer location is the Carol Stream Library, Niazatha Rd, off of Gary Avenue.

The ST. SIG meets around the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm. See the calendar for the exact dates. All meetings are at the Roselle Public Library, Park Ave., Roselle, IL. [Chairman: Mike Yocum 469-4490]

The MIDI SIG meets on the third Tuesday of each month at Cos Computers, 3705 N. Southport, Chicago, IL. [Chairman Greg La Brec 425-2085]

The schedule and location of meetings are subject to change so be sure to look in the most recent newsletter for the correct date.

The deadline for submission of material or advertising copy for the newsletter is the 10th of the prior month. All material received after that date will be considered for inclusion in a future issue.

The SCAT Newsletter is a publication of the Suburban Chicago Atarians. Any comments or questions should be addressed to SCAT via P.O. Box 72266, Roselle, IL 60172. Or call any of the following officers:

Jeff Williams	President	587-5384
Ken Reid	Vice President	893-2913
Ron Rogers	Treasurer	824-0588
Ron Ufkin	8-bit Librarian	636-3345
Kris Cosentino	16-bit Librarian	472-8476
Jeff Jirsa	Secretary	
Bob Dillon	Newsletter Ed.	639-1412
Jill Des Jardins	8-bit Editor	893-9119
John Semenek	Sysop	462-9833
Steve Sikorski	Adventure Master	830-0667
Bob Schuricht	President Emeritus	894-4334
24 hour Bulletin Board System		462-9844

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## S. C. A. T. Suburban Chicago Atarians

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Dues for SCAT are \$15.00 a year per family. Additional membership cards are available for \$1.00 each. To join, just fill out this questionnaire and bring it to the next meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can send it to: SCAT, P.O. Box 72266, Roselle, IL 60172

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

8-BIT:  
Number of computers \_\_\_\_\_ Newest Model \_\_\_\_\_ Memory \_\_\_\_\_ K  
Modified? \_\_\_\_\_ How? \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Disk Drives \_\_\_\_\_ Brand(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Density \_\_\_\_\_ Modified? \_\_\_\_\_ How? \_\_\_\_\_  
ATR? \_\_\_\_\_ Configuration \_\_\_\_\_  
Cassette \_\_\_\_\_ Modem (Brand) \_\_\_\_\_ Interface \_\_\_\_\_  
Printer (Brand) \_\_\_\_\_ Interface \_\_\_\_\_

16-BIT:  
Number of computers \_\_\_\_\_ Newest Model \_\_\_\_\_ Memory \_\_\_\_\_ K  
Modified? \_\_\_\_\_ How? \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Floppy Disk Drives \_\_\_\_\_ Model(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Modified? \_\_\_\_\_ How? \_\_\_\_\_ Hard Disk? \_\_\_\_\_ Size \_\_\_\_\_ MEG  
Modem (Brand) \_\_\_\_\_ Printer (Brand) \_\_\_\_\_

Programming: Check the programming languages you use

None \_\_\_\_\_ Action! \_\_\_\_\_ Assembler \_\_\_\_\_ Basic \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_ Cobol \_\_\_\_\_  
Fortran \_\_\_\_\_ Logo \_\_\_\_\_ Modula2 \_\_\_\_\_ Pascal \_\_\_\_\_  
Pilot \_\_\_\_\_ Prolog \_\_\_\_\_ RPG \_\_\_\_\_ Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Pay Telecom Systems: Check if you use the service  
American People Link \_\_\_\_\_ CompuServe \_\_\_\_\_ Delphi \_\_\_\_\_ Source \_\_\_\_\_  
Games Computers Play \_\_\_\_\_ TCS \_\_\_\_\_  
Other pay service (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you own another brand of personal computer? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, which? \_\_\_\_\_





# July 1987



# August 1987



SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

			1	2	3	4 NO MEET- ING!
5	6	7 ST SIG	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 Midi SIG	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

						1 SCAT Meet
2	3	4 ST SIG	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 MIDI SIG	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

The **scat** Newsletter

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